

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated February 23, 2006. All rejections and objections of the Examiner are respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and further examination is respectfully requested.

Support for the present amendments to the claims is found throughout the Specification as originally filed, and in particular in lines 1-4 of page 6.

The Examiner has required replacement sheets for the drawings. Formal drawings submitted herewith are respectfully believed to meet all requirements of the Examiner in this regard.

At paragraphs 1-32 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4 and 6-57 for anticipation under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), citing United States Patent number 6,097,720 of Araujo et al. ("Araujo et al."). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Araujo et al. disclose a system for enabling multicast distribution efficiencies in a dialup access environment. The Araujo et al. system includes a multicast source end station, such as a remote access server for an Internet service provider, and a plurality of multicast receiving end stations, such as customer premises equipment CPE, coupled to an intermediate device in the network. Araujo et al. teach establishing point-to-point sessions between a source end station and the plurality of receiving end stations according to a communication protocol such as the "PPP" ("Point-to-Point Protocol"). Araujo et al. further teach establishing a point-to-point session between the multicast source end station and the intermediate device, through which the source end station feeds multicast messages to the intermediate device. See Abstract.

Nowhere in Araujo et al. is there disclosed or suggested any multicast communication system having multiple subscriber locations, each subscriber location having a single access device through which a plurality of subscriber devices access multicast information sent by a multicast distribution device, including:

... wherein each said access device processes a first join request received from one of said subscriber devices by determining whether said access device is already joined to a multicast group indicated by said first join request, and, in the event that said access device is not already joined to said multicast group indicated by said first join request, sending a second join request to said multicast distribution device, wherein said second join request is a request for said access device to join said multicast group, ~~and~~ wherein said access device does not forward said first join request to said multicast distribution service, *wherein said joining said multicast group by said access device on behalf of said first subscriber device includes authenticating, in response to said second join request, said access device by said multicast distribution device, and wherein said multicast distribution device does not authenticate said one of said subscriber devices* (emphasis added)

as in the present independent claims 1, 4, 15, 28 and 42.

Applicants first note that in paragraphs 12-15 and 17-19 of the Office Action, the Examiner relies on Araujo et al.'s use of PPP reject claim features relating to authentication. The Examiner states that "PPP features authentication". Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion in these rejections, since authentication is only an *optional* feature of PPP, and there is no teaching in Araujo et al. towards the use of authentication in the PPP connections. Moreover, even if PPP is considered to include authentication, and Applicants make no admission that this is the case in the teachings of Araujo et al., then authentication would necessarily have to be performed on each PPP connection in the Araujo et al. system. Such an interpretation of Araujo et al. would result in authentication being performed between the RAS 11 and the end stations 7-10 of Fig. 1 along the PPP connections 2, 3, 4 and 5, as shown in Fig. 1.

These hypothetical end-to-end PPP "authentications" of Araujo et al. would be *in addition* to the authentication performed on the PPP connection 25 between the access multiplexer 20 and the RAS 11. Accordingly, Araujo et al. fails to recognize even the desirability of providing a system in which the *multicast distribution device does not authenticate the subscriber devices*, as in the present independent claims. The RAS 11 of Araujo et al. is required to perform authentication each time a subscriber device is added, in contrast to the system of the present independent claims, which advantageously allows subscriber devices to be added or removed *without affecting the multicast distribution device*.

For the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully urge that Araujo et al. does not disclose or suggest all the features of the present independent claims 1, 4, 15, 28 and 42. Accordingly, Araujo et al. does not anticipate the present independent claims under 35 U.S.C. 102. As to the remaining claims, they each depend from either claim 1, 4, 15, 28 or 45, and are believed to be patentable over Araujo et al. for at least the same reasons. Reconsideration of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, the Examiner's rejections are respectfully believed to be overcome, and it is respectfully requested that they be withdrawn. This application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone David A. Dagg, Applicants' Attorney at 617-630-1131 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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